

**Washington, DC** – U.S. Congressman Ciro D. Rodriguez (TX-23) Friday urged eligible taxpayers to claim the Earned Income Tax Credit this year, which helps boost needy families out of poverty each year. **“With tax season coming up, every dollar is going to count,” Congressman Rodriguez said. “This important tax credit is available for eligible taxpayers, but each year up to 7 million eligible taxpayers don’t claim it. That should change this year as we seek to make more people aware of this key tax benefit.”**

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 – or the Stimulus – temporarily extended the EITC to allow working families with three or more children to qualify for the credit. That translates into an additional 650,000 families and 1.3 children who are now eligible for this credit.

To qualify for the EITC, earned income and adjusted gross income for individuals must each be less than:

- \$43,279 (\$48,279 married filing jointly) with three or more eligible children
- \$40,295 (\$45,295 married filing jointly) with two eligible children
- \$35,463 (\$40,463 married filing jointly) with one eligible child
- \$13,440 (\$18,440 married filing jointly) with no eligible children

The maximum credit for tax year 2009 is:

- \$5,657 with three or more eligible children
- \$5,028 with two eligible children
- \$3,043 with one eligible child

According to the IRS, one in four eligible taxpayers fails to claim the EITC. That often includes workers without qualifying children, people whose earned income falls below the threshold required to file a tax return, farmers, rural residents, people with disabilities and nontraditional families such as grandparents raising grandchildren. People must file a tax return to claim the EITC. Free help is available to EITC-eligible taxpayers. There are nearly 12,000 free tax preparation sites nationwide. People who want to prepare their own tax returns can visit Free File on IRS.gov. This free tax software and free electronic filing program will walk taxpayers through a question and answer format and help them claim the tax credits and deductions for which they are eligible. For more information on the tax credit and eligibility, visit [www.irs.gov](http://www.irs.gov)

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